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(HABITAT II)

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Preparation for the Conference

PROGRESS REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE CONFERENCE SECRETARIAT

Report of the Secretary-General

SUMMARY

1. This report presents a review of the significant activities and accomplishments of the Conference secretariat and its external partners since the second substantive session of the Preparatory Committee for Habitat II (held in Nairobi from 24 April to 5 May 1995).

2. Part I describes activities that have been undertaken and tasks that must be completed prior to the Istanbul Conference in June 1996. It delineates the fundamental mission of the Conference and links the various activities of the secretariat and its partners to that mission.

3. Part II provides more detailed information on in-country, host country and partners' preparations, on the drafting of the main political and technical documentation and on activities to disseminate information as well as to raise awareness of the Conference among potential participants, partners and the global public.

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Part I

A. INTRODUCTION

1. In 1992, the General Assembly of the United Nations, concerned that people's living environments were deteriorating and in need of focused attention, called for a second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements - Habitat II. Habitat II was envisaged as the last in the current series of United Nations conferences dealing with global issues of importance to humanity: the environment and development, human rights, population, social development, women and children. This series of global conferences has been invaluable in raising awareness about human and environmental conditions around the world and in committing national Governments and the international community to ameliorate the worst of those conditions.

2. In calling for a conference on human settlements, the General Assembly has given voice to an illuminating notion: it is within our settlements - our cities, towns and villages - that all issues of common importance converge. It is in our settlements, where people must manage life together, that the commitments, plans and programmes resulting from the various global conferences of the past decade are to be realized. With Habitat II, the General Assembly has issued a challenge for Member States to move on from the statement of international principles to commitments to local action.

3. The challenge of Habitat II is manifold, having as many dimensions as human settlements themselves. It calls for action in nearly all areas covered by recent conferences: improving living conditions for women, children and the disadvantaged, cleansing and protecting the physical environment, defending the rights of individuals, generating employment, promoting commerce and industry, encouraging ethnic groups to live in harmony, and enabling all people to participate in community life free from poverty and fear.

4. All this cannot happen, however, by approaching each issue, individually, in a sectoral manner. Problems of poverty, ecology, economy, community and security are interlinked in so many ways that they may be solved only at their intersection - in our settlements - through the framework of governance. How people organize themselves to set common priorities, coordinate resources and activities and reconcile differences is the function of governance at all levels. Governance is the way in which we manage our common affairs and consists of the systems by which we achieve, among other things, our humanitarian objectives. For sustainable human settlements development, improving those systems in order to make them inclusive, accountable, just, fair and effective must, of necessity, be the underlying mission of the Habitat II Conference. All else, including the grass-roots implementation of the plans and programmes of other United Nations conferences, will depend upon the success of this mission.

5. In the nearly two decades since Vancouver, there has been a shift in how we address human settlements problems, from a centrist, prescriptive, top-down orientation, towards one much more participatory and reliant upon open-ended democratic processes. In this emerging modality, people come first, and Governments (comprising constitutions, laws, ordinances, rules of procedure, policies, budgets, equipment, infrastructure and facilities, elected leaders, managers and technicians) at all levels take on a facilitating role. Governance, in this context, requires that the human, financial, and technical resources be committed, through policy, to help achieve the goals of the civic society. Governance also requires people to become committed, as responsible citizens, to working with each other to improve their living environments.

6. In this spirit of partnership, the secretariat for the Habitat II Conference has adopted the role of facilitator by, among other things, promoting broad-based participatory processes at the national and international levels, involving both the public and private sectors in preparing for Habitat II. The results of these processes will not only define objectives for national and local action, they will help to set the priorities for international cooperation for problem solving and capacity building. Most importantly, the preparatory process for Habitat II is playing a significant part in setting the stage for improved human settlements conditions in countries throughout the world by encouraging the formulation of policies and partnerships for sustainable human settlements development.

B. ACHIEVEMENTS

7. Over the last two years, UNCHS (Habitat), as the secretariat for the Habitat II Conference, has focused the world's attention on sustainable human settlements and shelter. National Governments everywhere, often for the first time, have created partnerships with local authorities and numerous non-governmental organizations, including private businesses and academic institutions, in analysing human settlements conditions, identifying priority issues, in evaluating best practices, and in formulating first-step, five-year plans of action to tackle the main problems of settlements and shelter. Within guidelines provided by the secretariat, each participating country has adopted an approach to these tasks that is most suitable to its own circumstances. Bringing so many countries into the preparatory process (137 as of 15 November 1995) is one of the major achievements of the secretariat.

8. The drafting of the global plan of action and the statement of principles and commitments has also been broadly based, with Member States and their many partners in civic society contributing to the global document along with the United Nations system of agencies and organizations. Starting with PrepCom 2, responsibility for the drafting process has been assumed by the Preparatory Committee itself, through open-ended meetings of its Informal Drafting Group. This process has been time consuming, as are most participatory processes, but has resulted in a draft plan of action that attends to the variety of worldwide needs and capacities. It has become the Member States' document and will set their agenda - *The Habitat Agenda* - for the first two decades of the twenty-first century.

9. *The Habitat Agenda* begins with statements of principle and commitment in the form of a declaration by Member States. It then proposes specific actions to attain two goals: sustainable human settlements development in an urbanizing world and adequate shelter for all. Because most actions will be undertaken at the national and local levels, *The Habitat Agenda* emphasizes building capacity and developing institutions in-country, strengthening local authorities, facilitating broad participation and civic engagement, defining government responsibility, planning and managing metropolitan areas, generating financial resources, creating effective economic instruments and guaranteeing the flow of information and communication. *The Habitat Agenda* also sets the framework for international cooperation in financing sustainable development, in technology transfer and in information exchange. Taken in its entirety, *The Habitat Agenda* is developing into a policy plan for improving the processes of governance and for technical cooperation in support of those processes at all levels.

10. Given the extent and rapidity of urbanization, *The Habitat Agenda*'s emphasis on policy formulation, especially in the areas of monitoring, evaluation and feedback, is believed to be the most effective approach to sustainable human settlements development and adequate shelter for all. This view is supported by the major reviews and studies that have been completed since PrepCom 2 [See: A/CONF.165/PC.3/3/Add.1 and A/CONF.165/PC.3/CRP.2], including the global report on the state of human settlements, *An Urbanising World: Global Report on Human Settlements 1996*. These reviews, collectively, show that the strategy of enablement has a position of rapidly growing importance in the politics of development and that capacity building for leadership and management within countries - especially at the local level - is the key to sustainable human settlements.

11. From the outset, a fundamental idea in the Habitat II preparatory process has been that the creation of human settlements must be viewed as a positive act in the human drama. Helping all people and, in particular, their leaders to understand the contribution that well-functioning settlements have made to culture, social cohesion, economic prosperity, environmental sustainability, and the general enrichment of human life is a first step in renewing the effort to build such settlements and is an essential goal of the Conference. Tackling the various causes of dysfunction - lack of capacity, insufficient resources, social conflict and exclusion, inadequate accounting, poor planning, barriers to enablement, lack of open decision-making and a missing policy framework, among other things - is the essential agenda for action.

12. One of the main vehicles for action is the *Best Practices Initiative*, conceived as a way of demonstrating that the seemingly intractable problems of settlements can be overcome through innovative approaches involving people in their communities and through partnerships between people, their Governments and the private sector. The identification, assessment and dissemination of best practices for sustainable human settlements development has been a major activity and achievement of the secretariat. *The Dubai Declaration*, adopted at the International Conference

on Best Practices in Dubai in November 1995, contains recommendations for institutionalizing the transfer of best practices through such mechanisms as training, education, awareness building and technical cooperation.

13. Just as best practices offer a vision of the human settlement of the future, the *Indicators Programme* is intended to help draw a picture of the present. Supported by several countries as donors and by the World Bank, another of the major achievements in the Habitat II preparatory process has been to involve, as of 15 November 1995, 108 countries in the collection of urban and shelter indicators. Like a common language, the vocabulary of this uniform set of indicators is being shared among all countries, enhancing the understanding of social, economic and environmental conditions pertaining to settlements and contributing to the identification of policy impacts and priorities for action. Over time, the application of indicators within countries will assist in the formulation of policies and strategies for action by providing both a baseline assessment of conditions and a means for tracking progress.

14. The Habitat II Conference, is, in effect, a partners' conference. Facing limited resources, a diffusion of human settlements issues, and a shifting paradigm for governance, the secretariat, as noted above, has adopted the role of facilitator and coordinator rather than executant. The secretariat has provided a series of guidelines for local authorities, NGOs and CBOs, the private sector, international organizations and others to initiate activities that will contribute both to the understanding of human settlements issues and to national and global plans of action. Senior members of the secretariat have also embarked on an extensive campaign to discuss Habitat II with all potential partners. As a result, preparatory activities are taking place all over the world and include: special seminars and workshops on substantive issues, national and local consultations to identify issues and establish priorities, meetings of ministers to agree upon regional political agendas, meetings of NGOs and local authorities to work out their roles and priorities in human settlements development, and research on human settlements and shelter. With few exceptions, the human, financial, administrative and technical resources required to carry out these activities have come from the participants themselves. This, in itself, is a demonstration that enablement, with proper facilitation and coordination, does work.

15. Another area in which the secretariat has achieved a global impact is in building awareness for Habitat II and the preparatory process. The secretariat has kept readers around the world informed on human settlements issues and on activities in the preparatory process for Habitat II. Information is targeted at partners' groups, and the whole staff of Habitat has been engaged in responding to specific inquiries. The secretariat has, in addition, provided articles and policy features to general newspapers and professional publications and is financing the drafting of a series of books by well-known urbanists. Staff members are also contributing to the review of the World Resources Institute report, *World Resources 1996-97*, the first seven chapters of which will be on urban environmental issues, and to the UNDP *Human Development Report, 1996*.

16. The promotional and public awareness activities of the secretariat are now moving into high gear. In partnership with the Department of Public Information of the United Nations, brochures, posters and information kits have been prepared in official United Nations languages. Promotional videos in English, French and Spanish, and substantive documentaries are also being produced in collaboration with other United Nations entities and the commercial media.

17. One of the most important partners in the Habitat II preparatory process has been the host country itself, the Republic of Turkey, which is investing its human, technical, financial and administrative resources in the success of the Habitat II Conference. The Government of Turkey and the City of Istanbul are making every effort to provide the Conference with the most convenient and amenable venues for each of the official and parallel activities worked out by the secretariat and the Preparatory Committee. There are to be several partners' forums, including a meeting of local authorities, in the days leading up to the Conference, as well as round table discussions during the Conference. NGOs will hold a parallel forum throughout the Conference at a site on the Technical University campus, just 400 metres from the Conference Centre. Turkish NGOs have volunteered to assist in the organization and management of Conference activities and have formed a host committee. Preparation of buildings and sites, including those for the Global Trade Fair on "Good Ideas for Better Cities", is proceeding on schedule and all should be completed in time for Conference activities.

C. WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE

1. Servicing the Conference

18. In the time remaining before Istanbul, a priority for the secretariat will be the servicing of the Preparatory Committee and the Conference itself. Much of the secretariat's effort will be devoted to organizing all Conference-related activities in Istanbul and in planning the logistical details to ensure that the activities are well coordinated. The main partners in this will be the host country, the Office of Conference and Support Services and the Department of Public Information of the United Nations and the large number of partners both within and outside the United Nations system which are co-sponsoring forums, round tables, exhibitions and other parallel activities.

2. The Habitat Agenda

19. The main document issuing from the negotiating process of the third session of the Preparatory Committee, *The Habitat Agenda*, will be edited, translated and widely disseminated in accordance with Preparatory Committee decisions. Other tasks will be to prepare major reports, books and the Video Prologue for presentation to the Conference in Istanbul. As per Decision II/6 of the Preparatory Committee at its second session, and taking into account views expressed at its third session, a synthesis of major reviews, contained in an executive summary [A/CONF.165/PC.3/3/Add.1] and main text [A/CONF.165/PC.3/CRP.2] to the third session of the Preparatory Committee, will be "converted into a publication for popular consumption and into a broadcast quality video(s)" prior to the Conference in Istanbul. These tasks will entail the management of editing, translation and production activities by the secretariat and will be carried out subject to available resources. Up to the time of the Conference, the secretariat will continue to facilitate discussions among Member States and among other key partners on contentious issues symbolized by any bracketed text remaining in *The Habitat Agenda* after PrepCom 3.

3. National reports

20. National reports, containing the first-step, five-year national plans of action, were to have been submitted to the secretariat by 1 December 1995. In reality, many Member States have required more time to complete the preparatory activities on which the national reports are based. A major task of the secretariat will be to identify those common priorities for action at the national level that will provide a basis for the Conference to direct the updating and refinement of *The Habitat Agenda* after Istanbul. Prior to the Conference the secretariat will undertake an analysis of all national reports and plans of action to identify, among other things, key tools and instruments which could be effectively used for furthering the objectives of the Conference and the implementation of *The Habitat Agenda*. As demonstrated by the preparatory process, the implementation of innovative approaches for strengthening institutions and capacity-building will not necessarily require new institutional arrangements, but rather a reorientation of existing human, technical and financial resources within a coherent and internally consistent framework.

4. Partners' preparations

21. These will continue up to and during the Conference itself. The success of the Conference will depend upon the degree to which the various partners' groups and organizations have developed an understanding of the issues and upon their commitment to become engaged in those issues at the level at which they can make the most effective contribution. The secretariat will increase its activities to assist networking among partners, to provide technical support for workshops, to accredit as many qualified groups as possible and to encourage partners to come to Istanbul prepared to make specific commitments to *The Habitat Agenda*.

5. Awareness raising

22. As the Conference draws near, the secretariat must redouble its efforts to raise awareness of the Conference and its goals. If the preparatory process is to have a life beyond the Conference as a form of national and local policy planning for sustainable human settlements development, partners' constituencies around the world must be made aware that a broadly based process has been set in motion and that they have an ongoing role to play. The

secretariat will continue to work with national and international media to bring the issues of Habitat II to the attention of individuals and their organizations.

6. Host country

23. In the remaining months, the heaviest single burden will fall upon the Government of Turkey, which has committed itself to hosting the Conference. The secretariat, with the United Nations Office of Conference and Support Services and Department of Public Information, will work to provide the normal services to the Conference itself, but the infrastructure and special ambience that will make the Conference truly effective and memorable requires the host country to manage a complicated set of operations that includes, among many other essential activities, major construction, logistical preparations, and hospitality arrangements. The secretariat is in full liaison with the Government of Turkey and will be working together with the host country and host city to ensure that the venues for Conference activities will be ready by the end of May 1996 and linked to the required services.

PART II

A. PREPARATION OF DOCUMENTS

24. The major political documents resulting from the Habitat II Conference will be the Principles and Commitments and the Global Plan of Action - collectively entitled *The Habitat Agenda*. The substantive foundation for the Agenda was compiled from many sources: direct input of individuals and organizations from around the world; technical studies of human settlements condition and trends; a comprehensive global analysis of human settlements; national reports and plans of action; and global and regional thematic workshops and seminars. Initial drafts were reviewed and discussed by the Preparatory Committee, which, beginning with PrepCom 2, assumed responsibility for adding the political dimension.

1. The Habitat Agenda: Principles and Commitments and Global Plan of Action

25. An Informal Drafting Group (IDG) composed of two representatives from each regional group of countries and six representatives of the major groups was established by Committee 2 of the second session of the Preparatory Committee, to determine the structure and content of the Global Plan of Action (GPA) and draft the preamble, statement of principles and commitments (Parts I, II and III). The Preparatory Committee further instructed the IDG, assisted by the secretariat, to meet in an open-ended intersessional meeting between PrepCom 2 and PrepCom 3 to draft the strategy for implementation (Part IV). The first intersessional meeting of the IDG (IDG1) was held in Nairobi in July 1995. In addition to the core group of 16 members and the chair, 33 countries and 5 non-governmental organizations participated in this first meeting. The one-week meeting resulted in a complete, non-negotiated draft document, provisionally entitled *The Habitat Agenda*.

26. The second open-ended intersessional meeting of the Informal Drafting Group (IDG2) was held in Paris in October 1995. The purpose of that meeting was to consider the comments received from all sources on the IDG1 draft document and to produce a revised draft of the Agenda which would be the basis for negotiation of a final draft at the third substantive session of the Preparatory Committee (PrepCom 3).

27. In preparing for IDG2, the secretariat was instructed by the IDG to distribute the complete draft document from IDG1 to national Governments, relevant United Nations organizations and agencies, and appropriate NGOs and experts, asking for specific comments. The IDG1 draft was distributed to all Member States and also placed on the Internet. A large number of Governments, NGOs, United Nations agencies and other organizations obtained copies through that medium. The secretariat also examined plans and programmes of action from other recent United Nations conferences for objectives, actions and language that should be included in the draft of *The Habitat Agenda*. All comments and findings were then incorporated, paragraph-by-paragraph, into the IDG1 draft document to produce an "annotated" version.

28. As requested by the IDG at its first meeting, the secretariat then revised the text of the IDG1 draft to reflect the collected comments and findings, including the results of relevant global and regional workshops and meetings

and comments from representative groups of NGOs and international networks of local authorities and their associations. Both the original document, annotated with comments, and the revised text were distributed to IDG members prior to IDG2 in Paris.

29. In addition to the 16 members of the IDG, representatives of 31 Member States, 6 United Nations organizations and agencies, OECD, the European Commission, and several associations of NGOs were present at the open-ended IDG2 meeting in Paris. After thorough debate and discussion of the revised text, the IDG produced the current draft version of *The Habitat Agenda* for PrepCom 3. The secretariat has translated and forwarded this draft to all Member States as A/CONF.165/PC.3/4.

2. Major reviews and reports

30. As a basis for the Global Plan of Action and as background to the issues of human settlements and shelter, the secretariat was requested by the General Assembly to produce four major reviews:

(a) Review of Trends in Policies and Programmes Undertaken by Countries and International Organizations to Implement the Recommendations Adopted by Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements [Vancouver 1976];

(b) Mid-term Review of the Implementation of the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000;

(c) Review of the Contribution to the Implementation of Agenda 21 of National and International Action in the Area of Human Settlements;

(d) Review of Current Global Trends in Economic and Social Developments as they Affect Planning, Development and Management of Human Settlements, and Recommendations for Future Action at the National and International Levels.

31. UNCHS (Habitat) also produced a status report on human settlements [see below] and a report identifying the interrelationships between other major United Nations conferences and Habitat II, *From Vancouver to Istanbul Persistent Problems, Common Goals, Shifting Approaches*. Following a decision taken by the Preparatory Committee at its second session, the secretariat has consolidated the findings of these major reviews and reports into a single document, *The Future of Human Settlements: Good Policy Can Make a Difference*. This document concludes with a set of proposed policy responses, including actions to be taken on land, finance, infrastructure, environment, transport and energy, governance, and institution building. The executive summary of the document has been presented to the Preparatory Committee as A/CONF.165/PC.3/3/Add.1 and the main text as A/CONF.165/PC.3/CRP.2.

3. Global report on human settlements

32. As requested by both the General Assembly and the Commission on Human Settlements, a global report on the state of human settlements has been completed. Entitled *An Urbanizing World: Global Report on Human Settlements 1996*, the report is a comprehensive review of human settlements around the world. Among the key observations is the view that the negative perception of towns and cities is being replaced by an emerging positive view of the role of urban areas in creating strong, competitive and modern economies and in contributing to culture and social progress. Urbanization, the report concludes, is an essential part of the development of most countries, but the rates of urbanization tend to exceed the capacity of Governments at national and local levels to plan and organize their transition and to provide for infrastructure, services and employment. According to the report, competent and accountable governance is required to capitalize on the potential capactiy of human settlements to combine safe and healthy living conditions and culturally rich and diverse lifestyles with low levels of energy consumption, resource use and waste.

B. IN-COUNTRY PREPARATIONS

33. The Habitat II in-country preparatory process is in full swing. By 15 November 1995, 137 countries had informed the secretariat that they were involved in preparing for the Conference. Of these countries, 106 had formed national committees, most of them broadly based, involving an unprecedented spectrum of public, private, NGO, community, professional and academic sectors. Eighteen countries were in the process of establishing national committees, and 13 were engaged in some Habitat II activity, although they had no national committee.

34. Using resources mobilized from bilateral and multilateral sources, as of 15 November 1995, the secretariat had provided technical and financial support to 62 national committees for the following purposes:

- Application of shelter and urban indicators;
- Learning from best practices in improving the living environment;
- The formulation of a first-stage, five-year plan of action.

The breakdown, by region, of the countries which have benefited from this direct support is provided in the following table:

REGION	COUNTRIES
Africa	35
Asia/Pacific	11
Arab States	4
Latin America/Caribbean	6
Eastern Europe	6
TOTAL	**62**

35. Briefing missions on Habitat II have been undertaken in all regions of the world with visits to over 80 developing countries. These missions have included ad hoc technical advisory support in response to specific requests for assistance.

1. National reports and plans of action

36. By 15 November 1995, the secretariat had received progress reports from 89 countries. Of these, 47 had submitted reports of a substantial nature, including draft national plans of action, reviews of the current situation and identification of priority issues. The other 42 countries submitted reports that are largely descriptive of preparatory activities undertaken. Final national reports were due on 1 December 1995, and the secretariat is in the process of analysing their content for priority issues, indicators of conditions and best practices and will continue to incorporate new contributions into the analysis up to the time of the Conference.

2. Best practices

37. As part of the country reporting process, the *Best Practice Initiative* has generated much interest and enthusiasm. As of 15 November 1995, the secretariat had received 314 submissions for best practices from 72 countries - and more submissions are coming in. The breakdown of best practice submissions, by region, is as follows:

REGION	COUNTRIES	SUBMISSIONS
Africa	16	50
Asia/Pacific	18	77
Arab States	7	14
Latin America/Caribbean	13	29
Eastern Europe	2	3
Western Europe	14	112
North America	2	29
TOTALS	**72**	**314**

38. Decision II/8 of the second session of the Preparatory Committee recommended that national committees for Habitat II consider organizing a national best practice competition/exhibition to identify gender-specific best practices and to undertake gender-specific analysis of existing best practices. As of 15 November, 35 countries had organized or were in the process of organizing national competitions/exhibitions on best practices. Of this total number of best practices received, 20 were gender-specific best practices. A primary force in generating national and local interest in best practices has been the Dubai conference on best practices held in November 1995, and co-sponsored by the Municipality of Dubai and UNCHS (Habitat).

3. Indicators programme

39. The Commission for Human Settlements approved 46 key urban and housing indicators to be collected and used for Habitat II country reporting. As of 15 November 1995, 108 countries were involved in the programme. Of these, 24 countries had already submitted their indicators, 60 had started collection, and another 24 were expected to start collection soon. The breakdown, by region, of the countries that had submitted or started collection of indicators is as follows:

40. The Indicators Programme has now set up a global database, and analysis of the indicators is under way.

REGION	COUNTRIES
Africa	30
Asia/Pacific	10
Arab States	10
Latin America/Caribbean	16
Eastern Europe	12
W.Europe/N.America	6
TOTAL	**84**

C. PARTNERS' PREPARATIONS

41. Pursuant to paragraph 6 of General Assembly resolution 47/180, a variety of partners are mobilizing their constituencies in preparation for the Conference, further strengthening its partnership character. The partners include, among others, local authorities, private sector enterprises, NGOs, and CBOs, United Nations entities, academics,

researchers, planners, and parliamentarians. In a number of countries, representatives of these groups are members of the national Habitat II committee. All partners consider the readiness of Committee Two in Istanbul to receive their declarations and commitments [see below] to be a major innovation in the organization of United Nations conferences and are actively planning to make substantive contributions.

1. The partners

42. *Local authorities* have been greatly encouraged by the PrepCom decision to accord them a special position in the Conference. The major international and regional associations of local authorities, operating under a new organization called Group 4 Plus (G4+), formed specifically to support the Habitat II preparatory process, are preparing to hold a World Assembly of Cities and Local Authorities in Istanbul from 31 May to 1 June 1996, just prior to the commencement of the Conference. Numerous individual cities have also contributed to the preparatory process by hosting conferences and seminars.

43. *The private sector* has become a major actor and contributor to the Habitat II preparatory process. Since PrepCom 2, a series of consultations on financing human settlements has been organized, often with private sector partners, focusing on private sector investments in improving human settlements conditions in all regions. In August 1995, the International Federation of Surveyors (FIG) held an African regional meeting in Harare on sustainable development and the International Real Estate Federation (FIABCI) co-sponsored a consultation on land policy issues that was held in Jakarta. At the African Regional Meeting of Ministers, held in Johannesburg in October 1995, private sector enterprise representing finance, land, building materials, construction and other aspects of human settlements development held a round table at which they issued a declaration setting out a series of recommendations for action by Governments to mobilize private sector resources. It was also decided to establish a permanent private sector round table on Habitat. A meeting of mayors of many of Africa's fastest growing cities with the private sector, entitled "Expanding Investment Frontiers in African Cities", was hosted by the mayor of Accra, Ghana, in November 1995 with the support of the UNDP Special Unit for Technical Cooperation for Developing Countries (TCDC) and the Habitat/World Bank/UNDP Urban Management Programme (UMP). Building on these and other private sector initiatives, worldwide, a Private Sector Forum for Habitat II is being organized, coordinated by the Progressio Foundation of the Netherlands, and will take place in Istanbul from 30 May to 2 June 1996, just prior to the Conference.

44. *The Habitat II NGO/CBO Facilitating Group (IFG), formed at PrepCom 2* and based on wide representation, is expanding its structure of issue caucuses, which now includes women, youth, children, values, urban research and training, and professional associations. The IFG is collaborating with the NGOs of Turkey to organize the NGO Forum to be held in Istanbul during the Conference. NGO representatives have participated in all of the meetings of the PrepCom's Informal Drafting Group to formulate *The Habitat Agenda*. Since PrepCom 2, NGOs have held national level consultations on the conference themes in a number of countries, including Egypt, Germany, Senegal, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. Since PrepCom 2, NGOs also have organized regional consultations for Africa, Asia/Pacific, the Arab States and Latin America/Caribbean. Well over 400 NGOs are now accredited to the Istanbul Conference.

45. *Youth groups* came together at the World Summit for Social Development to discuss their participation in Habitat II and organized themselves as an umbrella group, "Youth for Habitat II". This group has assigned regional focal points in Africa, Asia, North America, Latin America, Newly Independent States, Europe and Turkey and has participated in both substantive sessions of the Preparatory Committee for Habitat II. The Habitat II secretariat, working with Youth for Habitat II, has developed a guide for Governments and national committees to bring youth into the country preparatory process. Suggested activities in the guide include: information exchange, networking, publicity and awareness raising, empowerment of youth organizations, promotion of relevant research and analysis, production of information material and organization of consultations on youth and human settlements issues. As a result, youth groups in several countries are actively participating in Habitat II preparatory activities.

46. *Women's groups*. The secretariat has ongoing partnerships with the Habitat International Coalition's Women and Shelter Network, Grassroots Women Working Together in Sisterhood, and the International Council of Women. The latter is an international network of professional women involved in many issues, one of which is housing and

human settlements development. Within these three international networks, there are many local and national NGOs and CBOs. At the Beijing Conference on Women, a "super-coalition" was formed, uniting these three international networks. This coalition continues to work with the secretariat in preparing for Habitat II, through UNCHS (Habitat). A joint Plan of Action, based on the priority issues and basic strategies pinpointed in the coalition's statement for Beijing, has been developed and as part of the preparatory process is being promoted at both national and regional levels.

47. *United Nations organizations and agencies.* Because Habitat II is a conference of the United Nations, the organizations and agencies of the United Nations play a special role as primary partners with the secretariat. Many United Nations entities have ongoing programmes targeted to specific human settlements issues. Others are involved in contextual issues like population, trade, industrial development, and environment. United Nations organizations and agencies have been most helpful in sponsoring, and participating in, activities that will both define the issues and identify the roles of the various partners in implementing *The Habitat Agenda*. Many have also been active in drafting the main Conference documents and have provided substantive comments and contributions. Contributing United Nations entities include: UNDHA; DPCSD; UNDP; UNFPA; UNIFEM; UNV; UNEP; UNCRD; UNIDO; UNU; DPI; UNESCO; WHO; ILO; WMO; FAO; UNRISD; DESIPA and UNICEF. In addition, the cooperation so far provided by the regional commissions of the United Nations and other regional organizations in holding and participating in preparatory meetings has provided opportunities for countries to share experiences with in-country preparations and to identify issues of common concern in shelter and settlements development.

48. *Development banks.* As investment in human settlements becomes more urgent in an urbanizing world, the regional development banks and the World Bank share a vital interest in the outcome of Habitat II and are contributing in a variety of ways to the preparatory process. In addition to providing a major grant to the secretariat in support of in-country preparatory activities and the application of the urban indicators, the World Bank has taken the lead in co-sponsoring conferences and seminars, including the Habitat II Urban Finance Conference in Washington DC. The Asian Development Bank has organized a regional seminar for Habitat II on Megacities Management in Asia and the Pacific and will also host a second seminar in March 1996 on urban infrastructure financing. AsDB is also working with the secretariat in providing assistance to national preparations in the Asia/Pacific countries. Both the Inter-American Development Bank and the African Development Bank have also participated as sponsors of activities in the Habitat II preparatory process.

2. *Partners' conferences and workshops*

49. The purpose of these activities is to provide Habitat II partners an opportunity to focus global and regional attention on human settlements issues that are of specific importance to them, enriching the preparatory process, creating awareness of the themes and issues of the Conference and publicizing the National Plans of Action and *The Habitat Agenda*. These activities of the preparatory process form the calendar of events entitled "The Learning Year" [A/CONF.165/PC.3/INF.5]. This calendar includes over 90 independently funded events taking place in all parts of the world between June 1995 and April 1996, organized by, among others, 16 entities of the United Nations system, 17 cities and their associations of local authorities, 9 intergovernmental organizations, 13 non-governmental organizations, and 15 universities and similar institutions.

50. Because of their critical importance to sustainable human settlements development and adequate shelter for all, the topics of land management and urban finance have become central to the activity of a number of partners in the preparatory process. Regional consultations on land issues, co-sponsored by partners in both the public and private sector, have included: *Access to Land and Security of Tenure* (Ivory Coast, March 1995), *Access to Land and Security of Tenure* (Indonesia, August 1995), *Challenges of the Informal Town* (Brazil, September 1995), *Access to Land and Security of Tenure* (Costa Rica, September 1995) and *Women's Access, Control and Tenure of Land, Property and Settlements* (Sweden, October 1995). The results of all of these regional consultations will be brought together at a global conference on *Access to Land and Security of Tenure*, scheduled for 17-19 January in New Delhi. Regional consultations on financing human settlements, development and shelter have included: *African Regional Conference on Housing Finance Strategies for Habitat II* (Brazzaville, Congo, May 1995), *ECO-HAB International Forum on Habitat and Housing Finance* (New York, March 1995), *Asian Regional Conference on Financing Strategies for Habitat II* (Seoul, South Korea, March 1995), *LAC Regional Conference on Financing Strategies for*

Habitat II (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, October 1995) and *Investment Frontiers in African Cities* (Accra, Ghana, November 1995). A global conference on urban finance was held at the World Bank in Washington D.C. in September, 1995. The results of these consultations on land and financing issues have, in turn, been incorporated into the draft of *The Habitat Agenda*.

3. Regional meetings

51. In the course of 1995, a number of regional and sub-regional preparatory meetings were held at the ministerial level to formulate regional or subregional positions on the Conference's statement of principles and commitments and the Global Plan of Action. These meetings include:

(a) *Habitat Preparatory Meeting for Eastern, Central and Southern Africa* (Kampala, Uganda, February 1995).

(b) *Sub-regional Ministerial Meeting for Francophone Central Africa on Habitat II* (Brazzaville, Congo, April 1995).

(c) *Meeting of Ministers Responsible for Human Settlements in European Transition Countries on Habitat II Preparatory Activities* (Budapest, Hungary, June 1995).

(d) *Caribbean Regional Preparatory Workshop for Habitat II* (Bridgetown, Barbados, September 1995).

(e) *Third Arab Preparatory Conference for Habitat II* (Rabat, Morocco, September 1995).

(f) *Regional Ministerial Meeting for Africa on Preparations for Habitat II* (Johannesburg, South Africa, November 1995).

(g) *Regional Preparatory Meeting on Habitat II for Latin America and the Caribbean* (Santiago, Chile, November 1995).

D. INFORMATION AND AWARENESS BUILDING

52. In the period following the second session of the Preparatory Committee, the secretariat has continued to issue its new series of regular publications which focus on the human settlements issues to be addressed at the Habitat II Conference and which report key activities in the preparatory process. In a major effort to promote the Habitat II Conference around the world, several secretariat activities have focused on building awareness of the Conference among all partner groups and among the general public.

1. Publications

53. *Countdown to Istanbul*. Five issues of the journal/newsletter *Countdown to Istanbul* were issued in 1995 and an additional three or four issues planned for 1996. This regular publication focuses on the key issues, as well as on national and regional preparatory activities for the Conference. It further provides a source of feedback on their policies from the various actors in national contexts. In addition, it gives a voice to a wide range of actors in the human settlements sector: youth, women's and shelter groups, associations of community-based organizations and on academic research and host country preparations. A special gender-specific edition was produced for, and issued at, the Fourth World Conference on Women.

54. *Habitat Debate*. The UNCHS (Habitat) journal on the substantive programmes of the Centre, *Habitat Debate*, is of direct relevance to raising awareness and debate on new directions in human settlements actions. Its contributions are primarily from academics and practitioners in the field. *Habitat Debate* also provides another channel for reporting directly on meetings organized specifically to address the thematic issues for Habitat II. Four issues have been disseminated since the second session of the Preparatory Committee. Both of the above publications are issued in English, French and Spanish and are being distributed to addresses on a growing mailing list which,

in December, numbered almost 15,000. Like other information materials and all official documents, these are also available on the Internet. In addition, they are being distributed at all major meetings and global conferences.

55. Several books are being published for the Conference. Among the titles are *Cities for People*, *Local Authorities: Custodians of the Environment* and *The Changing Urban Landscape*. The first two are authored by well-known urbanists. The latter title will be produced by scholars of the Woodrow Wilson Foundation.

56. Several *global reports*, to be published during 1996, will pay particular attention to urbanization and present comparative analyses of conditions from around the world. These reports will include the World Resources Institute's *World Resources: 1996-97* and the UNDP *Human Development Report: 1996*.

57. *Feature and policy articles* have been produced and published either directly by the secretariat or by media services or public relations firms. The Centre for Human Settlements secretariat has contributed occasional articles to a wide range of professional journals and other publications focusing on social, economic and environmental issues related to human settlements development.

2. Promotional activities

58. *Partnership with DPI.* Since the second substantive session of the Preparatory Committee, the secretariat has continued its joint information activities with the Department of Public Information (DPI) of United Nations Headquarters, New York. A brochure has been prepared in all United Nations official languages and has been issued to national committees and other partners of the Habitat II process together with two posters and an information "backgrounders" kit.

59. *Media promotions.* A second promotional video on the goals of the Conference has been prepared, and has been disseminated in English, French, and Spanish. Other language versions are being provided for local broadcast and other uses through collaboration with national committees. The promotional video is targeted at national and international broadcast networks as well as at national committees and the other partners in the preparatory process. Sixty second and 30 second public service announcements on Habitat II in English, French and Spanish have been prepared for distribution to broadcast outlets worldwide for release in January 1996. Further documentaries have been produced by an international network and released in the last quarter of 1995 and at the beginning of 1996. In addition, a number of regional and national networks are producing and broadcasting programmes conveying the messages of Habitat II. In collaboration with DPI, a range of television and radio programmes were produced in 1995 and in early 1996. Collaboration with other United Nations agencies on Habitat II related documentaries has resulted in preparation of other broadcast products which will be released prior to and during the Habitat II Conference.

60. *United Nations Conferences.* The secretariat achieved a high profile for the Habitat II Conference at the two United Nations Conferences held in 1995 - *The World Summit for Social Development* and *The Fourth World Conference on Women* - by reaching out to all actors, through holding press briefings, organizing workshops and distributing information materials. On the last day of the NGO Forum in Beijing, the Huairou Commission was constituted from among 120 delegates to advise the Habitat II secretariat and the Secretary-General of the Habitat II Conference on gender issues related to *The Habitat Agenda*.

3. Special activities

61. *The Internet.* Gopher and World Wide Web sites on the Internet have been established to provide global access to Habitat II documentation and information:

1. *Gopher*

(a) Information Habitat's Habitat II gopher:

gopher://gopher.igc.apc.org:70/11/orgs/habitat/habitat2

(b) C.E.D.A.R.'s Habitat II gopher:

gopher://cedar.pan.univie.ac.at:70/1/HABITAT

(c) HUD Habitat II Clearinghouse:

gopher://huduser.aspensys.com:73/11/habitat/

2. *World Wide Web*

(a) Information Habitat's World Wide Web site:

http://www.igc.apc.org/habitat/

(b) People's Voices Campaign

http://www.igc.apc.org/habitat/people

(c) C.E.D.A.R.'s Habitat II World Wide Web site:

http://cedar.pan.univie.ac.at/habitat/habitat.html

(d) Linkages/Earth Negotiations Bulletin's Habitat II Web site:

http://www.iisd.ca/linkages/habitat

(e) Habitat II Aotearoa

http://archpropplan.auckland.ac.nz/planning/habitat/habitat-home.html

(f) Instituto de Pesquisas e Projetos Sociais e Tecnologicos:

http://www.ibase.org.br:80/~ipso/

(g) Friends of Habitat '96 Info Page:

http://www.ideas.wis.net//habitat.html

(h) Eco-hab International:

http://www.panix.com/~urbanomi/ecohab.html

(i) HUD Habitat II Clearinghouse:

http://huduser.aspensys.com:84/habitat.html

[Note: all the above World Wide Web sites can also be reached from the Information Habitat WWW site.]

3. *Habitat II Electronic Lists*

Habitat II has two electronic lists designed to stimulate and broaden global discussion of the Conference themes.

(a) Subscription to the **Habitat II Electronic list** may be made by sending an e-mail message to:

listproc@cedar.univie.ac.at

Do not enter a subject. In the body of the message, type the text:

subscribe Habitat2 your_name

(b) Subscription to the **People's Voices Campaign** (of the international NGO Facilitating Group) may be made by sending an e-mail message to:

majordomo@igc.apc.org

Do not enter a subject. In the body of the message, type the text:

subscribe peoples-voices

For additional information, contact Robert Pollard at:

rpollard@igc.apc.org

(c) *An electronic catalogue and database* on best practices for improving the living environment is currently under production for the Conference.

(d) *The Award of Excellence in Improving the Living Environment* is being organized to take place in Istanbul at a special ceremony to give special recognition to the most deserving practices for improving people's quality of life.

(e) *Television specials*, including case studies on best practices, are being aired on global and international television networks, including CNN.

E. ORGANIZATION OF THE CONFERENCE IN ISTANBUL

1. The Agenda and Scheduled Activities

(i) Organization and Rules of Procedure

62. At its second substantive session, the Preparatory Committee adopted a decision on the organization of work of the Conference, including the holding of two-day pre-conference consultations on the first and second days of June 1996. The PrepCom 2 decision also addressed the establishment of rules of procedure for the Conference. Both these decisions were recommended by the Preparatory Committee to the General Assembly for adoption at its fiftieth session. At the time of the preparation of this report, the General Assembly had not concluded its consideration of this item. The decisions of the General Assembly will be available in document A/CONF.165/PC.3/CRP.1, entitled "Matters arising out of the resolutions of major legislative organs of the United Nations and other intergovernmental bodies which are brought to the attention of the Preparatory Committee: note by the Secretariat".

(ii) Partners' Forums

63. *Partners' Forums* will convene in Istanbul in the days before the opening of the Conference. Each forum has a preparatory process of its own and will prepare a statement and commitments linked to the main themes of the Conference. At each forum there will be a debate on relevant issues and adoption of a statement. This final result will be conveyed on a specified date to the Second Committee of the Conference (also known as "the Partners' Committee") for hearings and debate among delegates to the Conference. Each forum will select its representatives

(about six each) to present its results to the Committee. The organizers of all forums are being asked to guarantee an equitable global representation by region, gender, and size, according to membership.

64. The present status of the partners' forums is as follows:

- The *World Assembly of Cities and Local Authorities* will take place on 31 May and 1 June and is being organized by the G4+, the special technical secretariat set up by the major international associations of local authorities to support preparations for Habitat II. An anticipated 350 mayors of large cities will participate and are expected to ratify the Local Authority Platform of Action and Commitments to the Global Plan of Action.

- *The Forum of National Academies of Sciences* will take place on 31 May and 1 June and is being organized by the Inter-Academy Panel on International Issues and the Council of Academies of Engineering and Technological Societies (CAETS). This forum is expected to ratify a platform on the role of cities in the development and transfer of technology.

- *The Forum of the Private Sector* will convene from 30 May to 2 June and is being organized by the Progressio Foundation based in the Netherlands. It will cover large and small businesses of all regions, as well as industry, commerce, service and banking organizations. The forum will conclude with an Award Ceremony for Corporate Best Practices for Improving the Living Environment.

- *The Forum of Parliamentarians* will take place on 31 May and 1 June and will be convened by, among others, the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the Global Parliamentarians on Habitat through the collaborative effort of a number of parliamentary associations which include the Inter-Parliamentary Union, The Global Parliamentarians on Habitat and Parliamentarians for Global Action.

- *The NGOs' Global Forum for Habitat II* is planned to start on 1 June and end on 13 June. It is being convened by the ad hoc Habitat II NGO/CBO International Facilitating Group (IFG) elected by NGOs in Nairobi during PrepCom 2. The forum venue will be the Technical University of Istanbul, within walking distance of the Conference site.

65. Other forums are now being organized and include a *Foundations' Forum*, *Forum of Urban Professionals*, and *Forum on Human Solidarity*.

(iii) Round Tables

66. *Round tables* will bring together eminent thinkers, entrepreneurs and professionals to discuss and exchange ideas on trends for the future city. Each round table is designed to capture attention and raise awareness on issues which will affect how we shall live in the future on an urbanized planet. Each will be fully facilitated by a chairman, will benefit from a background paper prepared by expert(s), involve four or five invited panelists, an appropriate international agency or organization, and an audience of about 200 persons. The round table themes include:

- Economy and Employment in the Cities of Tomorrow
- Transport in the City of Tomorrow
- Are Megacities Inevitable?
- Urban-Rural Linkages of the Future
- Urban Physiology of the 21st Century City

- Democracy and Citizenship in the City of the 21st Century
- Cities and the Information Society

(iv) Other Activities

67. Activities scheduled to take advantage of the urban setting and to enrich the Conference include concerts, awards ceremonies, special exhibitions, cinema and video festivals, tours and other events.

2. Host country preparation

68 The secretariat has been working closely with the host country, the Republic of Turkey, to coordinate pre-Conference activities, both inside and outside of Turkey, and to prepare a Conference site in Istanbul that will accommodate all activities planned to take place around the time of the Conference.

69. *Organization for the Conference* began in April 1994, when the Housing Development Administration of Turkey (HDA), under the auspices of the President of the Republic of Turkey, was designated as the organization responsible for the coordination and implementation of preparations for the Conference. In October 1994, the Habitat II Project Coordination Unit (HPCU) was established. Initially US$ 10 million was allocated by the host country for host country preparations, exclusive of approximately US$ 25 million for preparing the physical facilities for the Conference. In June 1995, the Istanbul Organizing Committee, comprising the heads of all relevant central and local government branches was established. Following consultations with the NGOs present at PrepCom 2, a professional secretariat was established and a host committee, comprised of about 20 Turkish NGOs, was set up. At the end of September 1995, a joint workshop of the host committee and Habitat International Facilitating Group (IFG) was held in Istanbul to discuss various issues related to Habitat II, as well as the details of the NGO forum to be organized during the Conference.

70. *The Conference site* selected enjoys a central location and proximity to most of the major hotels in Istanbul. The Conference, the associated forums and most of the parallel activities will be held in the so-called "Conference Valley", containing a conference centre, concert hall, cultural centre, open air amphitheatre, convention hall, and the meeting hall and classrooms of the Taskisla Building of the Istanbul Technical University. The premises were inspected during the United Nations Planning Mission to Istanbul in April 1995 and found to be particularly suitable. Closed-circuit television coverage of events is scheduled to keep participants informed of activities elsewhere in the Valley. A channel of the Turkish Radio and Television Authority will be allocated to UNTV, whose broadcasts will be relayed to all major hotels.

71. *A Global Trade Fair* on "Good Ideas for Better Cities" is being organized by the host country in conjunction with Habitat II on the theme of innovative, low-cost, appropriate and environmentally sound products, services and technologies in the field of human settlements. The Trade Fair will be held at the World Trade Centre, Istanbul, where approximately 30,000 m^2 of indoor and 50,000 m^2 of outdoor exhibition space is available. Fifteen per cent of the space will be allocated free of charge to the Habitat secretariat for the use of firms from LDCs.

72. *Exhibitions*. In addition to the United Nations exhibition to be organized by the Department of Public Information and the exhibition on best practices to be organized by the Habitat II secretariat, the Economic and Social History Foundation of Turkey has been commissioned to organize two exhibitions: "Istanbul: From the Past to the Future" and "Settlements and Housing in Anatolia", both to be held at a renovated historic building. Other exhibitions and cultural events are also being planned. A consortium has been designated as the advertising agency for the Conference, and various promotional materials have already been produced.

F. FUNDING

73. Since the second session of the Preparatory Committee in May 1995, significant contributions for the preparatory activities of Habitat II have been received and much progress has been made with the limited resources at the secretariat's disposal. The fact remains that in-kind and earmarked contributions continue to outpace general

cash contributions, while as the preparatory process enters its critical and final phase funds are urgently needed to cover core activities of the secretariat for the remaining eight months. The Preparatory Committee has called on countries to increase their contributions to the Trust Funds, and has requested the General Assembly to allocate, within existing United Nations resources, sufficient funds to
cover key operational tasks of the Conference ad hoc secretariat for the period October 1995 to June 1996 and to ensure that Habitat II will be treated adequately in comparison with other global United Nations conferences. The General Assembly's decision on this request is presented in A/CONF.165/PC.3/CRP.1.